Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 01401 280201Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1401

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, ETRD, CH, US

SUBJECT: AMERICAN EXPRESS AND THE US/ROC ECONOMIC COUNCIL

REF: STATE 100296; PEKING 1400

1. AS CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS OF THE NCUSCT WAS PREPARING TO LEAVE HIS CONVERSATION WITH TSUI PING, DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER OF THE BANK OF CHINA (PEKING 1400) HE WAS CALLED BACK TO DISCUSS AN ADDITIONAL MATTER, THE RELATIONS OF AMERICAN EXPRESS WITH THE US/ROC ECONOMIC COUNCIL, HEADED BY DAVID KENNEDY OF CONTINENTAL OF ILLINOIS. TSUI SAID THAT WHAT PAR-TICULARLY DISTURBED THE PRC WAS THE FACT THAT EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE NCUSCT, INCLUDING AMERICAN EXPRESS, WERE LISTED AS FOUNDERS OF THE NEW COUNCIL. PHILLIPS SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE PROPOSED COUNCIL MATTER WITH KENNEDY, WHO HAD SUGGESTED THE ORGANIZATION CHANGE ITS NAME TO THE US/TAIWAN ECONOMIC COUNCIL. TSUI REPLIED THAT THE PRC OBJECTED TO THE FACT OF THE COUNCIL'S EXISTENCE MORE THAN ITS NAME, AND WENT ON TO SAY THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNCIL BY ANY MEMBER OF THE NCUSCTO WOULD BE CONSIDERED "A MOST UNFRIENDLY ACT" TOWARD THE PRC. HE ADDED THAT IF ANY NCUSCT MEMBER SHOULD JOIN, IT WOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED A "BLACK MARK" AGAINST THE NCUSCT. PHILLIPS EXPLAINED THAT THE CHARTER OF THE NCUSCT DID NOT PERMIT IT TO EXPEL CONFIDENTIAL

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MEMBERS, AND THAT HIS AUTHORITY WAS LIMITED.

- 2. PHILLIPS HAS DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM WITH C.C. CHIU (CHTU CHENG-CHUEH), AN AMERICAN EXPRESS INTERNATIONAL BANKING CORPORATION VICE PRESIDENT WHO HAPPENED TO BE IN PEKING TO VISIT HIS MOTHER. CHIU SAID HE INTENDED TO CALL ON THE BANK OF CHINA DURING HIS VISIT, AND WOULD LET US KNOW THE RESULT.
- 3. COMMENT: PHILLIPS FEELS THAT TSUI TOOK A MUCH TOUGHER LINE ON THE "TWO CHINAS" IMPLICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE TWO COUNCILS THAN DID PRCLO COUNSELOR CHANG TSIEN-HUA IN AN EARLIER TALK. THE STATEMENT THAT ANY PARTICIPATION BY NCUSCT MEMBERS IN THE US/ROC COUNCIL WOULD BE A BLACK MARK AGAINST THE NCUSCT ITSELF, IS PARTICULARLY TROUBLESOME, SINCE PHILLIPS KNOWS THAT HE HAS NO MEANS BUT PERSUASION TO CONTROL HIS MEMBERS, MANY OF WHOM HAVE LARGE AND PROFITABLE INVESTMENTS IN TAIWAN. GATES

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